

City Council**Motion without Notice**

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| MM18.31 | ACTION | | | Ward:19 |
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Authorization to Release Section 45 Funds from the Development at 125 Western Battery Road, to Fund the creation and installation of a Commemorative Plaque for the Toronto Immigration Depot at Strachan Avenue - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy, recommends that:

1. City Council increase the approved 2016 Operating Budget for Heritage Toronto by \$4,125.0 gross, \$0 net, fully funded by Section 45 community benefits received as part of a Committee of Adjustment decision for 125 Western Battery Road (source account XR3028-4500112), for the production and installation of a commemorative plaque for the Toronto Immigration Depot at Strachan Avenue (cost centre HG0001/4995).

Summary

Heritage Toronto is working with Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common to commemorate a 19th century immigration depot that operated from 1871 until 1892 on Strachan Avenue just north of the modern Exhibition Grounds.

After heated civic debate on the location of new facilities to process immigrants, the federal government appropriated two pieces of ordinance land from several railway companies, totaling 61 acres. Contractors, Grant and York, began construction in late March 1870 on the site, which was strategically located at the intersection of the Great Western, Grand Trunk, and Northern railways, and far enough removed from downtown so as to assuage concerns about public health.

The complex included a two-storey landing and sleeping shed, a dining hall, cookhouse, and an attached storehouse with an underground cellar. There were accommodations for up to 1,500 people with separate quarters for single men and married couples. It also included the residence of the emigration agent, who was J.A. Donaldson until at least 1883. The government provided meals and employment services and local businesses were often contracted to the immigration depot. Immigrants, arriving from the east, would spend a few days at the sheds, before boarding

trains to head north- or westward.

The Committee of Adjustment, on January 11, 2012, approved minor variances for the development at 125 Western Battery Road. As one of the conditions of approval \$300,000 was secured, and received, to be used for the Liberty Village pedestrian and cycling bridge and/or other suitable community benefits, as determined by the Ward Councillor.

This Motion seeks authorization to amend the 2016 Operating Budget of Heritage Toronto to fund the creation and installation of a commemorative plaque for the Toronto Immigration Depot at Strachan Avenue.

Heritage Toronto had estimated the entire project to cost \$6,500. Friends of Fort York have fundraised and donated \$2,375.00 to this project.

As Heritage Toronto is a directly funded City agency and not considered an "outside party", no undertaking is required to be signed by Heritage Toronto governing the use of the funds and financial reporting.

2016 marks the 145th anniversary of the opening of the facility. Heritage Toronto and the Friends of Fort York, their community partner on the project, would like to complete the plaque project in the summer of 2016 to be able to plan for an unveiling event in the Fall of 2016. Given the plaque production timeline, work needs to start immediately. Moreover, Heritage Toronto considers this plaque project urgent due to planned construction in the area of the former immigrant depot site, in particular the condominium project planned at 10 Ordnance Street. It is important that heritage interpretation be part of future development in this growing neighbourhood.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM18.31